DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 197 281 CS 005 775

AUTHOR Chapman, L. John
TITLE The Reader and the Text.
PUB DATE 80
NOTE 32p.: Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the United Kingdom Reading Association (17th, Warwick, England, July 28-August 1, 1980).

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Communication (Thought Transfer): *Discourse Analysis: Elementary Secondary Education: Language Patterns: *Language Processing: *Reading Comprehension: *Reading Processes: *Reading Research: Reading Teachers: Semantics
IDENTIFIERS *Cohesion (Written Composition)

ABSTRACT

Language studies examining the language-thought relationship are important as are those that study other psychological factors concerned with the storage of knowledge. Since language is a product of the social process, it is important to consider that the meaning intended by the sender of the message (author) may not be the meaning decoded by the receiver (reader). Studies that examine language variation, particularly dialect and register, affect the classroom, for different curriculum subjects often have their own distinctive registers. Reading comprehension is also affected by the child's ability to give the correct intonation pattern to the printed work. Studies of textual analysis, grammatical analysis, and cohesion provide an even greater depth of understanding of ways in which readers might be cued to build up their comprehension of the complete text. A current research program in Great Britain is attempting to discover how children perceive textual cohesion in the texts they read in school. (HOD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED197281

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

The Open University,
Faculty of Educational Studies
Walton Hall,
Milton Keynes,
Bucks. MK7 6AA

DRAFT

The Reader and the Text

by

Dr. L. John Chapman

Presidential Address give to the 17th Annual Course and Conference of the United Kingdom Reading Association, University of Warwick, 28th July - 1st August, 1980

To appear in Chapman L.J. (Ed.)
The Reader and the Text (in Press)

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
L. John Chapman
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

CS005775

The Reader and the Text

In this paper I intend to give an overview of recent developments in the study of reading. Such an overview will, of necessity, be subjective in its choice of topics, but I hope that it will, nevertheless, provide insights for the teacher of reading.

The division between the reader and the text is an unnatural one and has been made for organizational convenience only. One cannot read without a text, and a text without a reader is inert. The reader must be observed in as much detail while reading as the text is when examined in isolation.

Before going further, I must mention another element, an old and thorny problem, rendered typically as 'to what extent does meaning reside in the text and to what extent in the mind of the reader?' (see Olsen, 1977). It seems likely that, if any one text is given to a number of readers selected at random, they will, all things being equal, give renditions of the text which will be very similar. These similar meanings must originate in the text.

On the other hand, individuals from the same random sample of readers are likely to bring greater or lesser amounts of knowledge to that text. This knowledge will influence how well or how easily they comprehend that text. There will, therefore, be variation in interpretation. However, the

range of legitimate interpretation will be confined. The text will only allow individual interpretation within clear boundaries.

Reading: an eclectic study

During the last two decades at least, the study of the reading process has been characterised by increasing eclecticism. Many other disciplines of study have assisted the reading teacher and specialist in an examination of one of the most complex of human abilities, that of reading. Philosophy, psychology, sociology, artificial intelligence, information, communication theory and linguistics have all been drawn upon to assist our understanding of reading; indeed, it could be said that those who have studied reading from these many perspectives must be among the most widely read of all.

It is worth noting that the term 'eclectic' not only implies borrowing or choosing from another area of study, but also selecting the best from that area. The field is now so vast, however, that it requires further restrictions. One must, of course, try to select the best from those disciplines which can offer powerful insights, but must bear in mind how useful these insights will be to the teacher of reading.

A text, any text, is a piece of language. It may be spoken language or it may be written or printed language. It may be as short as a single expletive or it may be a three-hour

sermon; it may be one printed word, such as 'Halt,' or an immense novel, such as War and Peace. Whatever its length or the mode in which it is cast, it is someone's attempt to communicate, using language, either with himself or with an other or others. Leaving aside for the moment messages addressed to ourselves, like an aide-memoire or a personal poem, the essentials appear to be message originator(s) or sender(s), message or text, and message receiver(s), - in everyday terms, speaker(s) or author(s), text, and hearer(s) or reader(s). These are the basis of human communication. To begin an exploration of the reader and the text in this way may seem strange, but many of the developments in our understanding of language, especially those that have implications for teaching, reside in a better understanding of these fundamentals. (See Chapman, 1981, for further discussion of this and other points in this paper).

Purpose

In the first place, it is clear that the speaker or author has a purpose in mind when addressing his communication to others. This is no recent thought. The philosopher Kant (1902) discussed these notions at the turn of the century. For him language has an outer purposiveness in that it serves the purpose of a thing other than itself, and, at the same time, the human being possesses an inner purposiveness. Hence the applicability to reading of Kant's off-quoted words, "nothing exists in vain", and "nothing happens without a purpose. To discover the speaker's or author's purpose(s)

is no easy task and may indeed be impossible, for there are many layers of purpose and some may be other than they seem. Mostly, however, we have to assume that the message is truthful; that is, until counter-indications are received. We must also remember that the receivers of the message, particularly readers, also have their own purpose or purposes when receiving messages from authors.

One aspect of the author's purpose that has presented great subtlety to examiners of texts is that of bias. The speakers or authors may deliberately bias their communication, as in propaganda, but there is also unconscious bias in both senders and receivers of messages. The consideration of bias is especially important to teachers of naïve readers.

The study of bias (see, for example, Zimet, 1976) has in the main been the province of psychology. A fundamental theme of psychologists language is the relationship between language, thought and other cognitive mechanisms. Although these areas have been subjects of empirical study for a long time, all is still far from clear. However, we can represent the relationship simply by saying that what appears to happen is that the ideas, thoughts and emotions residing in the speaker's or author's mind are encoded into language. Again, how this is done defies exact explanations as yet, for the relationship is both complex and mostly hidden from direct observation. If you are especially interested in this, see Waterhouse et al., 1980, for a summary of the implications of theories about language and thought for reading. For the teacher, however, some studies are important, for example, the notion that language not only

encodes thought but also shapes it. Vygotsky (1965, page 119) quotes from a poem by Osip Mandelstam to make this point:

> 'I have forgotten the word I intended to say,
> and my thought, unembodied, returns to the
> realm of shadows'.

The feeling conveyed here is that thoughts are somehow shadowy ephemera until they are put (embodied) into words. Whatever the relationship, and leaving aside for the moment paralinguistic features that surround speech, e.g. so-called body language, the basic process of communication involves encoding our thoughts into language or, in everyday terms, putting our thoughts into words in order to convey them to others clearly and precisely.

While acknowledging how fundamental the language-thought relationship is, other psychological factors concerned with the storage of knowledge are also of importance.

Prior Knowledge

Many researchers have stressed how prior or background knowledge can influence comprehension; by prior knowledge I mean the amount and richness of the knowledge of a topic that exists before reading about it. This knowledge can be said to be organised within the memory as schemata. Each individual stores in his/her memory millions of facts about the world and living that have been accumulated from ex-

perience. Schemata are the linked, structured arrangements of these millions of facts. It is suggested that these schemata contain a highly organized cross-reference system that can be alerted by any stimulus that is perceived through the senses and to which attention is paid (Langer, J. 1980).

Another version of this type of information storage system is knowledge frames. These tend to be stereotypes of events and the behaviour patterns that attend them. Examples might be 'catching a train' or 'eating out at a restaurant'. In each case our experiences, actual or read about, provide us with a frame of reference within which to locate and comprehend our present actual or reading experience (Fillmore, 1978 and 1979). Schemata or frames of knowledge come into play as reading proceeds, thus assisting comprehension.

Sociological

As the use of language is a unique human characteristic, despite recent efforts to teach chimps to 'talk', there are bound to be strong sociological implications as well as the philosophical and psychological already mentioned, for man is a social animal. Halliday (1978), for example, referring to the child's language acquisition, states,

> 'Language arises in the life of the individual through an on-going exchange of meanings with significant others. A child creates, first his child's tongue, then his mother tongue in interaction with that little coterie of people

> who constitute his meaning group. In this sense, language is a product of the social process.'

It will not escape notice that the term 'meaning' has already entered into the discussion more than once, e.g. "the child's meaning group", and this will receive more attention later, for all I want to say is that the purpose of the speaker or author is to convey his thoughts, ideas or emotions so as to influence his audience in some way, and to do this he employs language to transmit these ideas. However, the words used can only be indicators, at best, of the exact intention of the speaker or author, as there is no absolute here: the meaning intended by the sender of the message may very well not be the meaning decoded by the receiver. The speaker may have not been clear in her/his encoding, or, however clear s/he was, the hearer may have not perceived and decoded her/his message accurately. Thus, in reading, the author's intended meaning may not always be recoverable even to her/him.

Linguistic

As well as these basic philosophical, psychological and sociological insights, it is linguistics that has been productive over recent years and which has given further concentrated thoughts to some important features. These insights are directly relevant to teaching when interpreted to educationalists.

From these linguistic studies, I am going to mention four main topics: language variation, intonation, semantics and the process of text analysis.

Language Variation

One factor that has been emphasised in modern linguistics is that of language variation. The extent of that variation is now appreciated much more, as the following extract from a book review in 'The Times' would illustrate. In his review of a new book by Michaels and Ricks (1979), Howard (1980) comments as follows:

> "The notion of correct (or Queen's, or standard) English has become a difficult one for our generation which is correctly suspicious of authority. Like what we bees needin is beaucoup cognizance that brothers and sisters rappin on am not necessarily talkin a substandard creole, but don disprove that in living vibrant color. That may be incorrect Times style liable to make the sub-editor purse his lips and the night lawyer wake up with a start. But it is correct in Watts County, where the language of the Times would seem, if spoken, grotesquely stuffy, alien, and unintelligble. Each of us uses many different dialects (in this paper we distinguish the term dialect from register) of English, for different occasions (writing to one's bank manager, writing an informal letter, talking to a friend,

> talking to a stranger, talking on the dreadful telephone...) and each dialect is 'correct' in its proper context. What goes wrong is not deviation from some rational absolute standard of correctitude, but the use of an inappropriate dialect in an incongruous context, as in, "Ta-ta, Your Holiness, baby; see you soon, luv."

It might be difficult for some to perceive the speaker's meaning in the Watts County dialect, and yet, linguistically, neither this nor any variety is superior to another for the conveyance of meaning within any particular group. It is perfectly adequate in the situation shared by that language group. Furthermore, readers of standard English could read and understand most of the extract.

Two linguistic features are associated with language variation, that of dialect and register. Halliday (1978) provides tables which give a useful contrast between them. Dialect, he suggests, is language variety "according to the user" while register is variety "according to the use". So dialect, "what you speak habitually" is determined "by who you are and expresses diversity of social structure". On the other hand, register is "what you are speaking at the time" and is determined by "what you are doing and expressing diversity of social process". Attitudes to dialects are strongly held and many myths have accumulated accordingly, as Zimet (1979) pointed out at the 15th

U.K.R.A. Conference. While the dialect in the above example of language variation may have been extreme, it seems to be the case that most people can understand dialects even if they only speak them imperfectly. Written language appears to be neutral as far as dialect is concerned, and has the advantage of cutting across many dialects for the spelling of written words is not an exact representation of the sounds of the spoken dialect.

The major distinction between spoken and written text, however, is a matter of register. And here is the first major division teachers might note, for it is not only at the beginning stages of reading that style and register are important, but also later when children are reading to learn, for different curriculum subjects often have their own distinctive registers (Perera 1979).

To explore this further it is necessary to return to the fundamentals of sending and receiving messages and to notice the importance of the effects of the situation in which the message is embedded (see Chapman, 1981).

The Constraints of Speech

Spoken language is transmitted from person to person along waves of sound. Both speaker and hearer, because of its transitory nature, have to be in the same place at the same time if the message is to be received successfully. The spoken word is therefore restricted as to location and time. Indeed, the written word might have been invented to over-

come the restrictions of time and space, the here and now. The force of this can be appreciated when you read written messages from centuries ago by authors long since dead. Written language overcomes this drawback of speech but in doing so has developed its own characteristics. This major difference of register is obviously important during beginning reading when the child is encouraged to bring the spoken form to assist his understanding of the written. While further details of the differences between spoken and written language are outside the scope of this article, mention will be made nonetheless of one or two features of speech to indicate what is involved.

The implicit Context of Speech

Speech is not only tied to the situation in which it occurs, it also uses the intimacy of its situation to convey meaning. Speakers use a kind of linguistic shorthand which takes the physical situation for granted. For example, if speech takes place in a room where the furniture in that room is the topic of conversation, the speaker may say; "This is more serviceable than that". From the situation s/he will observe the identity of "this" as "this table" compared with "that" as "that desk" over there. In relating this example, it has been necessary to spell out or describe some of the physical situation because you, as readers of this paper and I as the author, were not in that room. Here then is a potential problem for the beginning reader unless s/he had adequate

previous knowledge of book language or the written register. The young reader has to carry over into the printed form not only the words but the knowledge of discourse, the rules observed in situations where communications are taking place between people.

A second point worth mentioning is that in the speech situation, both speaker and hearer are able to utilise other forms of communication to assist the transfer of meaning. If, for example, I was at a meeting of teachers and was making the point I've just made, about "this" and "that", I should find it difficult not to point to "this table" and "that" desk. There are what are called paralinguistic features, like pointing, which assist and confirm meanings during conversation. In the written register it is the author's skill as a master of that particular register that readers rely on to enable them to build the situation in imagination and thence apply their knowledge of discourse.

When regarded from this viewpoint, teachers will appreciate some of the difficulties of the beginning reader's task. Many early reading texts contain dialogue, presumably because it is thought to be easier in some way, more personal, and, in a hazy way, provides some kind of direct transference between spoken and written language. Unfortunately, some of the characteristics required for this transference are not well utilised as the samples of language in early reading books are controlled for other purposes which are thought to make

learning to read easier, e.g. word frequency and repetition.

Intonation

Perhaps the most important difference between the written and spoken text is the presence of intonation in speech. Some of the meaning is carried by intonation in speech. Some of the meaning is carried by intonation patterns. For example, during introductions, notice how the rising and falling tones are added to names in the performance of the ritual. Introducing a couple to each other, for example, I might say:

Gordon, Joan : Joan, Gordon

The tone rises on Gordon and falls on Joan, then, reversing the names, the ascending tone on Joan and descending on Gordon. The only actual words spoken are the two names, and yet the meaning is so much more. The expectation created by the 'introduction' frame in which the event takes place coupled with the intonation pattern creates a situation in which Gordon and Joan are quite aware of the speaker's meaning.

Note the flexibility and economy of the language. The communication could be expanded:

Gordon, this is Joan : Joan, this is Gordon,

or Gordon, I would like you to meet Joan... and so on.

Intonation is employed in many ways, but think for a moment of the young child learning to read. How does s/he know which

intonation patterns are appropriate? How does he know how to give the intonation pattern to the printed work when reading aloud, and what is the position during silent reading? Is intonation sub-vocal ? How does intonation, which is related to discourse, play a part in comprehension?

Brazil et al. (1980) have investigated intonation in discourse and made attempts to relate it to the reading process. They suggest that, when reading aloud, the reader has two options: "He can either enter into the text, interpret it and 'perform' it as if he himself were speaking to the listener, saying as it were, 'this is what the text means' or he can stand outside the text and simply act as the medium, saying 'this is what the text says'."

Some children, however, appear to be able to apply intonation correctly when reading aloud but do not necessarily understand the passage being read. This can be detected at times by oral 'miscues' but teachers may be mislead by what seems to be an adequate surface performance. Whichever, the beginning reader has to learn how to cope with a feature of language performance that is complex and still being acquired developmentally.

Semantics

In addition to language variation and intonation another major influence to come from linguistics is the revival of interest and progress in semantic studies.

Linguists generally examine language at three different levels, those of phonology, syntax and semantics (see Aitchinson 1978 for a useful introduction.) The first of these levels, phonology, is a fairly well developed field of linguistics within which there is now little fundamental disagreement. Syntax, the ordering of words in sentences, however, is more controversial. There are competing theoretical stances, especially between those who adopt the generative transformational grammar proposals of Chomsky and those who do not. However, there is some generally agreed ground.

Semantics, the third level, deals with meaning relations and there are many differing viewpoints over basic assumptions concerning the meaning of meaning (see Lyons, 1977). Ironically, although there is much diversity of opinion, this is probably the most important level of all for the educator.

The teacher of reading cannot go far without coming face to face with problems surrounding meaning, from the meaning of a vocabulary word to the meaning of whole books. Within the study of reading, meaning is often implied within the term 'comprehension'. The comprehension of texts in terms of helping the reader to understand them is the most important goal for the teacher of reading. Teachers are not only interested in their pupils' understanding, but they also envisage their pupils' remembering what they have understood. In this way reading teachers hope their pupils will learn from the texts they provide for a variety of curriculum purposes.

As well as linguistics, other areas of recent research are contributing to our understanding of comprehension. For instance, the work carried out by those who attempt to simulate human intelligence using computers has revealed how extensive the human memory store of everyday knowledge is. This knowledge is available when reading, and comprehension can be thought of as relating the meanings in the text to those existing in the memory store of the reader. This stored or prior knowledge has been underestimated as a factor in comprehension in the past. In an interesting article, Tuinman (1973-1974) showed that none of the five standardized tests of reading comprehension widely used in the U.S.A. provided sufficient guarantees against answering items on the basis of information other than that presented in the passage. That is to say that some of the questions in these reading comprehension tests could be answered from prior knowledge, not necessarily from the text.

To return to linguistics, I am going on to describe developments in types of linguistic analysis which are of great interes This type of work is time comsuming but does hold out promise of a greater depth of understanding of ways in which readers might be cued to build up their comprehension of the complete text.

Text Analysis

Linguists, cognitive psychologists and other workers, have drawn attention to ways in which written texts can be examined for their structural characteristics. These methods,

which have been subsumed under the general title of text analysis, seek to examine texts at the semantic level. Such analysis enables researchers and others to work through a text systematically to establish consistent features. It should then be possible to select any or some of the characteristics so revealed to see if they correlate with the reader's performance on that text. If so, the process could be of considerable help to the teacher of reading.

There are a number of methods of textual analysis ranging from those based largely on the text (linguistic) to those based on knowledge gained from the text. All these systems, however, examine texts seeking various forms of underlying consistencies. One of these, propositional analysis, first identifies basic units of meaning and then seeks to define ways by which these small meaning elements are structured to make up the complete text. This type of analysis originated in Fillmore's (1968) case grammar which uses the verb as the pivot around which units of meaning revolve. The propositions are listed according to their meanings, and the set of propositions so identified are analysed so as to make up what is called the text base. These text bases can be distinguished further into the text base structure, the template text base and the protocol text base structure. This formulation looks first at the smallest units at microscopic level as it were, and then shows how these same small elements are related to each other at a macro level.

Tierney and Mosenthal (1980) review five other methods of analysis for examining texts: story grammars, event chain formation, expository prose predicate structures, mapped patterns and cohesion. They point out the need for these types of analysis so that texts could be more effectively evaluated for quality and for level of difficulty.

Grammar: Extension of Usage

A grammar is a way of organising our knowledge of language-related facts. Grammarians aim to uncover rules by which language operates. Many grammars have been proposed, for example, Hallidayan, systemic and Chomskian. It is suggested by most grammarians that a speaker of the language, that is the fluent mother-tongue speaker, internalizes these grammatical rules as the language is learned and employs them during language production.

As mentioned elsewhere (Chapman, 1979) there have been movements lately towards studying longer stretches of language than has been the case previously, and some linguists have tried to extend the sentence grammars that have dominated language study to cover continuous texts. Werlich (1976), for instance, attempted to bring together and integrate the accumulated bits of previous knowledge about texts. The aim of his text grammar was to convey insights into the linguistic rules that govern all practical text production and text analysis.'

Story Grammars

This extension of grammatical analysis beyond the sentence has been applied to stories. It is suggested that stories have rules and structures in much the same way as other linguistic features, and that the hearer or reader of the story has internalized this story grammar, which aids the understanding of the story. There are some elements in stories which regularly occur and are rule governed. These abstract elements build up into a hierarchy. They include such things as setting, event structure, episodes and so on. The components of the story revealed by such an analysis will have concomitants in the story's comprehension. (see Stein and Glenn,(1978) for an example of the use of story grammar.) This type of analysis has both promise and intuitive appeal; however, it relates only to a restricted range of stories at the moment.

There are, as indicated above, other types of analysis (for example the work of Meyer (1975) on expository text), but it is not possible to examine them all in this paper.

Cohesion

Another different type of analysis is that of cohesion, which attempts to uncover patterns within the fabric of the text. Halliday and Hasan (1976) call these cohesive patterns 'texture'. Their analysis differs from those already mentioned as it is concerned with the surface structure manifestation of the text's meaning. Cohesion analysis is dependent upon the

Hallidayan thesis which views language primarily as socially relevant and thus essentially functional. According to Halliday and Hasan, a text is a semantic unit and can be any length and in any mode (e.g. spoken or written). Cohesion comprises "the set of semantic resources for linking a sentence with what has gone before." These features operate in such a way as to allow meaning to flow through a text and so unite it as a whole.

The analysis aims to establish the system of cohesive ties which operate within the text. The ties serve as linguistic linking mechanisms and can be arranged in five groups: reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction and lexical cohesion. The cohesive ties build up text unity by relating elements within the text to each other. For example, personal pronouns' identity can normally only be established by reference to their antecedents, as in the following:

Gillian baked a cake. She is a good cook.

In this way, reference cohesive ties contribute to textual cohesion.

Another of the groups of cohesive ties is that of conjunction. Members of this set of ties perform their cohesive function differently from the reference group. The conjunctions have specific meanings and connect the meaning of one sentence with that of another, or confirm the meaning that is implicit

between a pair of sentences. Four types of conjunction are distinguished: the additive, the 'and' type; the adversitive, the 'yet' type; the temporal, the 'then' type; and the causal, the 'so' type.

Figure 1 about here

Notice in this mini story how the identity of one character, 'boy', is maintained by the third person singular pronouns, 'he' (his)... 'he', and the writer by the first person singular pronouns: 'me'.... 'my'.... 'I'.... 'myself'.... The word 'ball' has both a reference cohesive tie, 'it', and a lexical cohesive tie, 'play'. The verbs 'come' and 'went' are also lexically cohesive, while 'then' and 'now' are cohesive ties of conjunction.

The other group of cohesive ties mentioned in Figure 1 is the group called lexical cohesion. This group can be further sub-divided into reiteration and collocation. Reiteration, as the name implies, is the repetition of the same word and this repetition has a cohesive effect. The other sub-division is that of lexical collocation.

Halliday and Hasan state that collocation is the association of lexical items that regularly co-occur. In texts, words that are associated with each other in meaning regularly co-occur and this meaning association is said to contribute to the cohesion of the text. Look at word relations in the following extract:

Figure 2 about here

In this extract the identity of the kettle is maintained by the third person singular pronouns 'kettle'.... 'It'.... 'it'.... 'its'.... 'kettle' (reiteration) and 'it'. 'Kettle' is again tied by lexical cohesion with 'tune' (we think of kettles singing), and then the collocational chain runs through: 'kettle'.... 'tune'.... 'hissed'.... 'jet of steam'.... 'spout'.... 'water boiling'.... 'kettle'.... In this way the episode in the story is given another dimension. It has been suggested that this lexical choice promotes the feel of the text and it is this affective quality of text that cohesion analysis provides that the other types of analysis do not. Cohesion analysis reveals inter-relationships between the reference system and the lexical. In Halliday and Hasan's terms a text can be analysed according to the cohesive tie system.

However, although the cohesive ties are the foundation of the analysis, it has been proposed recently by Hasan (1980) that the chains of ties are also related with each other within the text. You will have already noted how the ties can be chained so as to provide meaning pathways through the text. The reference items are chained so as to maintain the identity of, say, characters in a narration. At the same time as this identity chain is assembled, similarity chains through the collocational ties move through the text in parallel. The relationship between these two chaining devices, the identity and the similarity chains,gives the text, it is claimed, coherence (Hasan, 198

When texts are analysed for their cohesive properties, it is important to ascertain whether such an analysis will have any relevance to children's reading performance. In other words, will the detailed analysis which is complex and time consuming to undertake reveal information about the construction of the text that can make it more or less difficult to comprehend? If such relationships can be uncovered, then they will provide grounds for seeking teaching strategies based on simplified analyses to assist the reader. Such analyses as cohesion analysis are very recent indeed and much research is needed to establish their implications. However, if the chaining procedures are realised, then teachers will have a powerful explanatory tool to help them understand the comprehending process. Halliday and Hasan (1976) point out: 'There are, of course, other types of semantic relation associated with a text which are not embodied in this concept (cohesion); but the one that it does embody is in some ways the most important, since it is common to text of every kind and is, in fact, what makes a text a text.'

Some studies seeking such relationships have begun to appear, mainly in the United States of America. Rhodes (1979), for example, has looked at four simple stories used for teaching reading. The stories, which reflect differing instructional models, were chosen for being more or less predictable in their structures. Using retelling of the stories as a reading performance measure, she found a significant and persistent

relationship between the types of reading material and the reading behaviour exhibited by the children. She also demonstrated correlations of the results of analysis by story structure, and by cohesion analysis. She found that the analysis provided some differences between more or less predictable texts. It was also interesting to learn that readability formulae did not predict difficulty in this study.

In another study, Garber (1979) compared selected cohesive features in texts produced by six year old children with those in their beginning reading materials. She found that the child-produced language contained each of the five kinds of cohesive ties studied, but that every type of tie was not found in the three textbooks selected. Garber's study demonstrates ways in which cohesive analysis can help in the understanding of the way in which meaning is incorporated into texts. Such analysis is a useful way of gathering information about texts. However, as she points out at the end of her study, its value will lie in what is yet to be discovered, "the relationship between comprehension and cohesion."

Phillips and Zinan (1980) in a study which looked at cohesion and readability, examined cohesive ties in a Basal Reading Series, for (American) Grades 1-6, that is a reading scheme designed for children between the ages of 6 and 12 years. They point out that the series had a controlled vocabulary throughout and that the vocabulary development is usually accompanied by an increase in sentence complexity. The series also

included both expository and narrative prose. They ask about ways in which sentences are related to each other and how these might be organised.

They found that certain cohesive ties predominated at certain levels. In the primer, for example, although personal reference ties are the most frequent, conjunctive ties also appear. Interestingly, though the simple conjunctions such as 'and' and 'but' appear throughout the series, they usually occur at the beginning of sentences in the early books, then, as the sentences become more complex, they are incorporated within the sentence. Referring to lexical cohesion, reiteration and collocation, they suggest that in the early readers, reiteration probably reflects the lack of other cohesive elements. They also point out that lexical cohesion through collocation, or association of related words, can also be found in the primer, and help to carry the theme of each story. It remains to be seen whether these procedures will provide teachers with information on texts that will assist them in developing the reading abilities of their pupils.

In the U.K. some research has been done (see Chapman, 1979, a, b, and c, 1980, 1981) and a research programme, sponsored by the Department of Education and Science, is attempting to discover how children perceive textual cohesion in the texts they read in school.

References

Aitchison J. (1978) Linguistics. Teach Yourself Books. London: Hodder and Stoughton.

Brazil D., Coulthard M. and Johns C. (1980) Discourse Intonation and Language Teaching. London: Longmans p.83

Chapman L.J. (1979a) Some Developments in Text Linguistics: Implications for the teacher of reading. Paper presented at the 1st Anglo-Scandinavian Course Conference. Leeds. ERIC no. ED 173 767

Chapman L.J. (1979b) Pedagogical strategies for fluent reading. In Thackray D. (Ed.) Growth in Reading. London: Ward Lock Educational 147-154.

Chapman L.J. (1979c) Confirming children's use of cohesive ties in text: pronouns. The Reading Teacher, vol. 33 no. 3 317-322.

Chapman L.J. (1980) The Development of the Perception of Textual Cohesion. Paper presented at the 25th Annual I.R.A. Convention at St. Louis, Missouri, U.S.A.

Chapman L.J. (1981) Developing Reading. London: Heinemann Educational Books.

Clark M.M. (1970) Reading Difficulties in Schools. Penguin Papers in Education. Harmondsworth. Penguin.

Clark M.M. (1976) Young Fluent Readers. London: Heinemann Educational Books.

Fillmore C.J. (1968) The Case for Case. In Emmon Bach and Robert Harms (Eds.) Universals in Linguistic Theory. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1-88

Fillmore C.J. (1979) Scenes - and - Frames Semantics. In Sampoli A. (1979) (Ed.) Linguistic Structure Processing. Fundamental Studies in Computer Science vol. 5. Amsterdam: North Holland Publishing Company.

Garber M.D. (1979) An Examination and Comparison of Selected Cohesive Features Found in Child-Produced Texts and Beginning Reading Materials. Unpublished PhD. dissertation, Georgia State University, Atlanta, Georgia.

Halliday M.A.K. (1975) Learning How to Mean. London: Edward Arnaold.

Halliday M.A.K. (1978) Language as Social Semiotic. London: Edward Arnold.

Halliday and Hasan (1976) Cohesion in English. London: Longman.

Hasan R. (1980) Cohesive Harmony. Paper presented at the 25th Annual I.R.A. Convention at St. Louis, Missouri, U.S.A.

Howard P. (1980) Language of the Tribe. The Times. 23rd January, 1980.

Kant E. (1902) Critique of Pure Reason, Preussiche Akademic der Wissenschaften.

Langer J. (1980) Pre-Reading Plan (PREP) : Facilitating Text Comprehension. Paper presented at the 17th UKRA Conference and Course, University of Warwick, July, 1980.

Lyons J. (1977) Semantics vol 1 Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Meyer B. (1975) The Organization of Prose and its Effects on Memory. van Kijk T.A. (Ed.) North-Holland Studies in Theoretical Poetics. Amsterdam. North-Holland American Elsevier.

Michaels L. and Ricks C. (1979) The State of the Language. London: University of California Press.

Olsen (1977) From Utterance to text: The Bias of Language in Speech and Writing. Harvard Educational Review 4.7 (3). 257-281.

Perera K. (1979) The Language Demands of School Learning, in Supplementary Reading Course PE232 Language Development. Milton Keynes, The Open University Press.

Phillips J.M. and ZINAN S. (1980) Cohesion and Readability: Cohesive Ties in a Basal Reading Series, Grades 1-6. Unpublished papers. Teachers College, Columbia.

Rhodes L. (1979) The Interaction of Beginning Readers' Strategies and Texts Reflecting Alternate Models of Predictability. Unpublished PhD dissertation. Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana.

Stein M.L. and Glenn C.G. (1978) An analysis of story comprehension in elementary school children: In Freedle (Ed.) Discourse Processing. New Jersey: Academic Press.

Tierney R.J. and Mosenthal J. (1980) Discourse Comprehension and Production: Analysing Text Structure and Cohesion. Technical report No. 152. Center for the Study of Reading. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Illinois. U.S.A.

Tuinman J.J. (1973-74) Determining the passage dependency of comprehension questions in 5 major tests. Reading Research Quarterly. Vol. IX (2) 206-223.

Vygoksky L.S. (1965) Thought and Language. Cambridge, Mass. The M.I.T. Press (paperback edn.)

Waterhouse L.H., Fischer K.M. and Ryan E.B. (1980) Language Awareness and Reading, Newark, Delaware, International Reading Association.

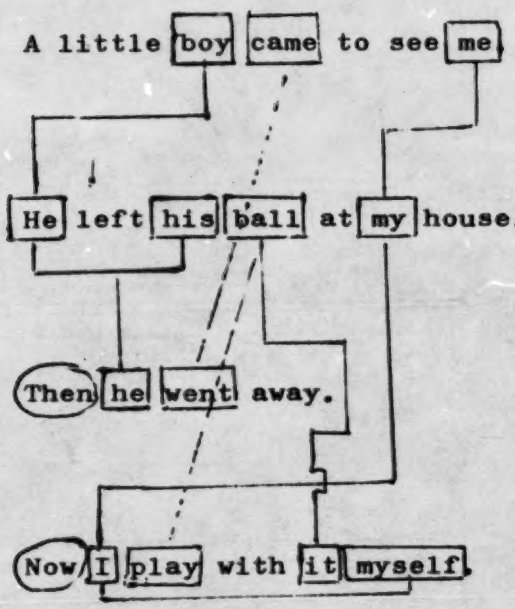
Werlich E. (1976) A Text Grammar of English. Heidelberg: Quelle and Meyer.

Zimet S.G. (1970) Print and Prejudice. London: Hodder and Stoughton.

Zimet S.G. (1979) Dispelling myths and examining strategies in teaching non-standard dialect speakers to read. In Thackray D. (Ed.) Growth in Reading. London: Ward Lock Educational p.49-61.

Figure 1

Cohesive Ties: examples of reference conjunction and lexical cohesion



Key

Reference ties

Lexical Cohesion

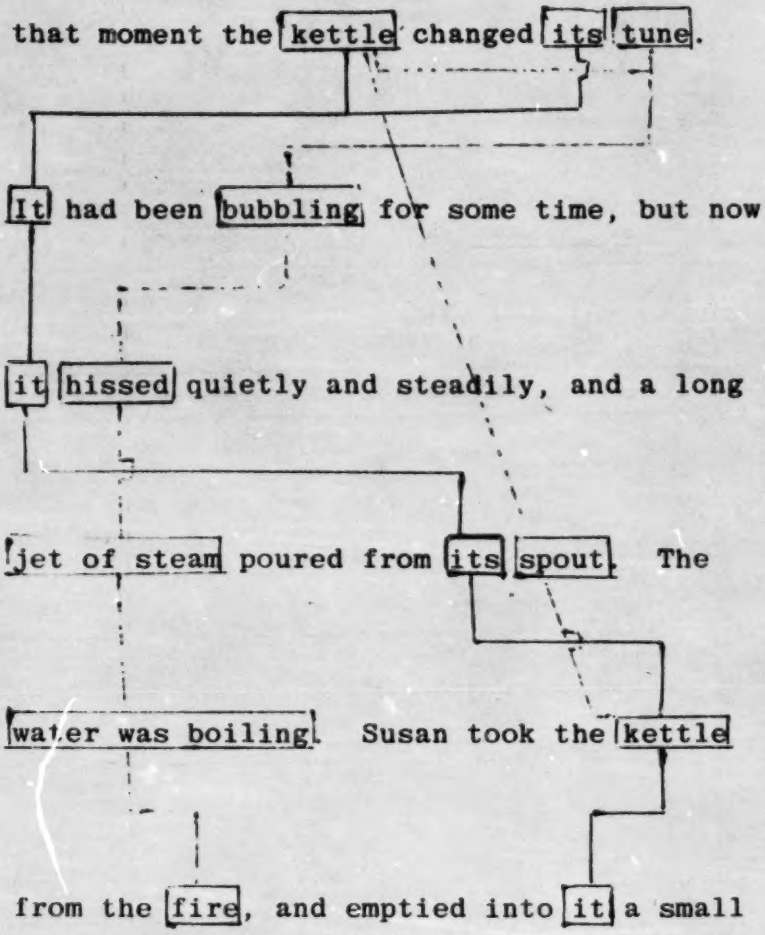
Conjunction (temporal)

From Clark (1970, p. 79) quoted in Clark (1976, p. 12) Neale Analysis of Reading Ability

Figure 2

Examples of Lexical Cohesion

Let's start at once", said Roger, but at


that moment the kettle changed its tune.
It had been bubbling for some time, but now
it hissed quietly and steadily, and a long
jet of steam poured from its spout. The
water was boiling. Susan took the kettle
from the fire, and emptied into it a small

packet of tea.

Key

Reference ties

Lexical Cohesion

From: Swallows and Amazons by Arthur Ransome.